

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 4937

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS AT OAU SUMMIT

REF: USUN 1956 (NOTAL)

1. DURING JUNE 17 DISCUSSION BETWEEN IO DEP ASSISTANT SECY BAKER WITH HRD CHIEF VAN BOVEN AND DEPUTY CHIEF SONON (UPPER VOLTA), BOTH TURNED TO REGIONAL HR MACHINERY, PARTICULARLY IN OAU, AS MOST DESIRABLE PRIORITY FOR NEXT ADVANCE IN HR IMPLEMENTATION.

2. ASKED HOW OAU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SUCH MACHINERY, VAN BOVEN INDICATED THAT HE PLANNED TO RECOMMEND TO SYG, FOR HIS ADDRESS AT OAU SUMMIT, A REFERENCE TO IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. SYG WOULD BE URGED TO FOLLOW THIS UP PRIVATELY IN TALKS BETWEEN SYG AND PRESIDENT OF OAU WITH SUGGESTION OF OAU RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD INVITE HRD TO STAGE A SEMINAR. SEMINAR WOULD FOCUS ON REGIONAL HR ORGANIZATION IN ORDER TO ILLUSTRATE ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF ESTABLISHING SOME TYPE OF OAU HR MACHINERY WITH WHICH AFRICANS WOULD BE

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LESS UNCOMFORTABLE THAN UN HR MACHINERY. OBJECTIVE, SANON EXPLAINED IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION, WOULD BE CREATION OF GROUP OF DISTINGUISHED AFRICAN LAWYERS WHO WOULD MEET TO CONSIDER COMPLAINTS OF HR VIOLATIONS IN AFRICA -- NOT CONFINING THEMSELVES TO SOUTH AFRICA.

3. BAKER INDICATED INTEREST IN IDEA BUT NOTED THAT USG

SUPPORT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE HELPFUL. SANON, HOWEVER, URGED THAT, ONCE THIS IDEA PRESENTED TO SYG, US ENCOURAGEMENT DIRECTLY TO WALDHEIM MIGHT BE HELPFUL GIVEN HIS EXTREME CAUTION RE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA.

4. COMMENT: FOREGOING IDEA EVIDENTLY ORIGINATES WITH SANON WHO IS FAIRLY RECENT ARRIVAL AT HRD. IT APPEARS TO HAVE SUPPORT OF VAN BOVEN WHO NOT SANGUINE ABOUT ACHIEVING UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. END COMMENT.

5. USUN MIGHT FIND OCCASION, IF DEPARTMENT CONCURS, TO EXPLORE LATER THIS WEEK WITH BUFFUM WHETHER THIS IDEA HAS COME FORWARD THROUGH HIM AND WHETHER DISCREET U.S. SUPPORT TO SYG WOULD BE HELPFUL. BUFFUM'S OWN VIEWS WOULD BE OF INTEREST. IMPACT OF THIS IDEA ON AFRICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD ESTABLISHMENT OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER WOULD NEED STUDY.

6. AT SAME TIME, BUFFUM VIEWS OF HRD REORGANIZATION, IN WAKE OF RECENT JAY LONG VISIT TO GENEVA WOULD BE OF INTEREST. EUROPEAN AS WELL AS AMERICAN EMPLOYEES IN HRD REMARKED TO BAKER, AT SOCIAL GATHERING OF GENEVA HR TYPES, THAT IT IMPORTANT THAT US ROLE WITHIN HRD BE STRENGTHENED, RATHER THAN WEAKENED, AS THEY NOW ANTICIPATE, IN COURSE OF REORGANIZATION. WESTERN EMPLOYEES ANXIOUS ABOUT ROLE OF VAN BOVEN'S DEPUTY SANON, WHO WAS PRESENT WHEN CALL MADE ON VAN BOVEN, AND WHO APPARENTLY SO OBIQUITOUS THAT FEW FELT THEY HAD OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK FRANKLY WITH LONG. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT SOVIETS APPARENTLY EVEN MORE ANXIOUS
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ABOUT REORGANIZATION. ACCORDING SANON, SOVIET DEP REP MADE CALL ON VAN BOVEN JUST AFTER BAKER LEFT LEAVING HEAVY THREATS ABOUT UNGA ACTION IF ROLE OF "SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE" IN HRD REDUCED.SORENSEN

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